

Chelsea Open Air Nursery and Children's Centre

51 Glebe Place, Chelsea, London, SW3 5JE

Inspection dates 10—11 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The very creative way in which learning is planned for each child, within the extremely rich learning environment, ensures that all children make outstanding progress.
- The result of outstanding impact shines through in the delight that the children display in each new discovery they make and the pride they have in every success.
- The Head Learner's inspirational leadership enthuses others, including the knowledgeable governing body, to have high aspirations for themselves and the children.
- All staff are excellent role models. They are very knowledgeable and have extremely high expectations of themselves and the children.
- Children thrive on the challenges that each new situation presents. They make secure links in their learning, are naturally inquisitive, seek out their own solutions and are confident to question.
- Staff benefit from the excellent professional development they receive. They use it in a highly effective way to broaden and improve their practice.
- Behaviour is exemplary because a love of learning abounds and children are vitally interested in all they do.
- This is a caring, happy community. Its rich diversity gives children an outstanding opportunity to learn how to show mutual respect and work and play in a harmonious way.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed children learning in focused groups and in activities led by adults and those children chose for themselves, for six and a half hours.
- Two joint observations were carried out with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body, the headteacher, senior leaders and staff. The inspector talked to children informally during the observation times. She had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of documentation including improvement plans and self-evaluation, as well as assessment data from the monitoring of children's progress. Documents detailing the nursery school's arrangements for safeguarding children were scrutinised.
- The inspector took into account the 23 responses on Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, one letter from a parent or carer and nine questionnaires returned by staff.

Inspection team

Barbara Atcheson, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is similar in size to other nursery schools.
- One third of children are of White British heritage and the remainder come from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds.
- A lower than average proportion of children is known to be eligible for the pupil premium.
- The proportion of children who speak English as an additional language is broadly average. A few are at the early stages of learning English.
- A lower than average proportion of children is supported through school action.
- An average proportion of children is supported through school action plus.
- There are currently three children with a statement of special educational needs.
- There is a children's centre on site which was not part of this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Use the government's new standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five as a basis for keeping a check on the rate at which different groups make progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Children enter the Nursery with levels of skills, knowledge and understanding that are below those typical for their age.
- Children's overall progress is exceptional across all areas of learning. Where the school has had a particular focus, for example in mathematical development last year, pupils' progress has got even better.
- Children are encouraged to explore, investigate, experiment and above all question. They quickly become confident learners, who are keen to rise to every challenge. Evidence from Parent View confirms that parents and carers are very happy with their children's progress.
- A good example of challenge was seen when a boy who needed four sticks for a model picked up five. The teacher encouraged him to count the sticks, but there was one left over. She did not intervene but watched as he wrestled with the problem of whether he needed the extra stick. He came to the correct conclusion in his own time. The pride he felt in his success was evident in the broad grin which broke across his face.
- Children not only gain a love of reading through listening to stories but they use and apply their new-found knowledge later on. For example, children sitting under a sukkah, listening to a story about the Jewish festival of Sukkot, remembered the story. Without any prompting they made links in their learning when listening to a story about harvest in England, later in the day.
- A wealth of story bags in different languages and a collection of science boxes ensure that the good work that is carried out in school continues at home and includes parents and carers as important partners in learning. Early writing skills are practised when signing up for an activity and children's speaking and listening skills are practised and honed in everything they do.
- Pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs also make exceptional progress. This is because of the high priority the school gives to meeting their needs. It ensures consistent and high-quality help from well-qualified staff whenever it is needed.
- One-to-one help for those eligible for the pupil premium ensure any gaps in learning are closed effectively. Children who speak English as an additional language receive learning support that is extremely well matched to the level of their competence in English language and this gives them confidence in their learning.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Teachers are very knowledgeable about the work of educationalists such as the school's founder, Dr Susan Isaacs, and use it to enthuse children in their learning. Everyone from the 'Head Learner' to the youngest child is a learner.
- Teachers make sure that children follow simple guidelines so that they make the most of their time at school. For example children are taught how to sit, how to listen and how to give full attention. As a result in story time, in 'get together times' and in focused activities children know what is expected. All adults are skilled in asking questions which make children think about their learning. They are also skilled in the more difficult art of knowing when to intervene and when to hold back so that children get the most learning from their activities.
- Children are inspired and motivated within the safe, stimulating environment because they have the freedom to explore and push themselves to the limit. However, they also delight in learning new skills such as how to throw and catch a ball or how to work together to float a large parachute and send 'rocket bear' up to the moon. Adults not only bring back the new expertise that they learn on courses, they build on it, adapt it and make it their own.
- These positive attitudes towards learning, values and behaviour permeate the school and ensure that all children become confident, inquisitive, independent learners.
- Teachers are acutely aware of children's individual capabilities and plan carefully, reflecting on the progress that children make and readjusting plans to help them make the maximum amount

of progress. All staff aspire to be experts in their field. Nursery officers and teaching assistants are highly skilled in knowing how and when to support all children but particularly those with special educational needs or at a very early stage of learning English.

- Work in small groups helps these children to make fast progress because learning is tailored to meet their particular needs, for example, learning how to take turns and begin to communicate effectively.
- Language and early reading skills are developed skilfully. Children quickly learn to love books through the stories that they listen to. All staff encourage children to understand that books and text are read from left to right. Adults encourage reading by pointing automatically to the words as they read. Teachers also link sounds with letters whenever the opportunity arises.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Even though the children have not been at the Nursery for very long, their behaviour is exemplary. As soon as they step over the threshold they quickly seek out something which entices them as if drawn by a magnet. The atmosphere is quiet because they become immersed so quickly in activities such as experimenting with water or sliding along the tree trunk.
- Children concentrate extremely well and stay very focused on their learning. They talk to adults confidently and freely about what they have found out. Strong relationships help children to feel secure enough to play and learn alongside and with others and are happy to make choices.
- All adults encourage children to ask questions and become independent learners. Children are encouraged to take responsibility for their own well-being and know to say 'Stop it, I don't like it, because...' As a result children quickly learn to respect each other.
- Children feel very safe in the Nursery. They are confident to take risks in the outdoor area, but listen carefully and respond to adults when they feel children are entering an activity that is potentially dangerous.
- The school's anti-bullying week uses stories and traditional tales as a focus for role models and discussion, and children feel confident to discuss any concerns with their key worker. Any cause for concern is discussed and meetings are planned to ensure that the children's needs are being met.
- Although children of this age often succumb to childhood illnesses, attendance is high because children love coming to school. A very large majority of those parents and carers who responded to Parent View agree that children are safe and well behaved.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher leads a skilled team of highly committed staff. They share her passion to maintain the trend of continuous improvement, which has been judged outstanding by two previous inspection reports. They ensure that self-evaluation is accurate, and monitoring and evaluation systems and procedures are rigorous. All staff execute their responsibilities in a highly effective way and continuously evaluate and discuss priorities.
- Information about how well children are doing is used very effectively to monitor the school's performance and adapt aspects of its work to ensure that progress is excellent for all children. However, the way in which the school keeps a check on the progress of different groups of children has yet to be updated in line with the government's new standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five.
- Robust performance management, and focused staff development, especially for newly qualified staff, have sustained the outstanding teaching found in the previous two inspections. All staff are keen to refine their practice and seek out even more effective ways to meet children's needs. The local authority provides useful opportunities for professional development in the course of its light-touch support for this outstanding school.
- Professional development courses are devised to meet the needs of individual teachers and also

the needs of the school as a whole. Coaching and modelling are used very successfully to raise the skills of newly qualified staff.

- The creative, rich curriculum makes an outstanding contribution to the excellent achievement of all children. The excellent opportunities that are planned for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development ensure that all in the school respect each other and get on exceptionally well.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- has a secure knowledge and understanding of the nursery school's strengths and weaknesses and uses this effectively to ensure that a high level of provision is maintained
- offers a high level of support and also acts as a critical friend particularly in relation to ensuring that the school always gives outstanding value for money
- ensures that the performance management system, including the performance management of the headteacher, improves the quality of teaching and leadership
- ensures that statutory duties are met and that financial resources, including the pupil premium, are managed effectively.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	100474
Local authority	Kensington and Chelsea
Inspection number	400416

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	59
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Maria Elena Arana
Headteacher	Kathryn Solly
Date of previous school inspection	18–19 November 2009
Telephone number	0207 3528374
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